

Most Asked Questions about the DDSN Provider/Service Directory

1. What is the DDSN Provider/Service Directory?

The DDSN Provider/Service Directory is a list of agencies or entities that are qualified to provide DDSN-funded services to you, our consumer, or to your family member.

Each entity on this list must meet the federal, state and DDSN requirements for quality and safety to become a provider of DDSN supports and services.

2. Why is this increase in choice of service providers important to me?

Having more approved service providers gives you more choices of who can provide the services and supports you need. Expanding your choice of who provides your services is an important step in helping you increase control over your life.

3. Where can I get the Provider/Service Directory?

For a current DDSN Provider/Service Directory, visit our web site at www.ddsn.sc.gov and click on Provider/Service Directory, or ask your Service Coordinator, Early Interventionist or Qualified Mental Retardation Professional for a copy of the current list.

4. Do the new service providers offer their services in all counties?

No. The Provider/Service Directory includes all service providers by county.

5. If I choose a different provider, do they have to serve me?

No. Be sure you check with the new provider to find out if they will serve you.

6. Does the Provider/Service Directory mean I get more supports and services now?

The Provider/Service Directory does not provide more services but more choices of service providers. Your choices also depend on the

type of service you need and whether there is a qualified provider in your area to provide it. Remember, all providers do not offer their services in every county of the state.

7. **Does more choice in providers mean there is no longer a waiting list for DDSN services?**

No. There are still waiting lists. Every effort is made to address waiting lists. Unfortunately, there are not enough resources to meet every need.

New consumers applying for services and eligible consumers requesting additional services are being added to waiting lists.

8. **Can I choose a provider from another county?**

Yes If the provider is listed on the Provider/Service Directory as approved to provide that service in your county. Be sure to check with the new provider to find out if they can serve you.

9. **Do I have to wait until my next planning meeting if I want to change service providers?**

No. You may contact your Service Coordinator, Early Interventionist, or Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional now.

10. **Will I have to pay a fee to the new provider if I choose to change?**

No.

11. **Can I keep the same person as my Service Coordinator or Early Interventionist if I choose to change providers?**

In most cases this will be possible, but it will depend on the service you are getting.

12. **If I pick a new provider, may I change immediately?**

How soon you can change depends on the service you are getting.

13. If I choose to change service providers, do I have to move all my services to the new provider?

Not usually.

It may depend on the service.

14. Will the new provider offer services I have not been getting through my current provider?

Possibly.

This is something you need to talk about with your Service Coordinator, Early Interventionist or Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional.

15. If I were to change service providers, and then find out I don't like the new provider, may I go back to my old provider?

Always talk with your current provider before you change to see if it is possible for you to return.

16. What are important facts I need to know if I am considering whether or not to change providers?

If you are unsure about how to interview or talk with a provider, call your Service Coordinator, Early Interventionist, or Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional.

To help you choose the best provider to meet your needs:

We encourage you and your family to meet with, and get to know the new provider before you make your decision.

Ask who the provider serves. What ages? Which type(s) of disabilities? Ask how long they have been in the business of supporting people with disabilities. You need to know the experience level of the provider and how well its staff is being trained.

Discuss your needs and the services you want to meet those needs with the provider. Learn how they believe services should be provided for people with disabilities. Try to find out if services are "made to fit the person," or if the "person must fit" into services as they are.

Visit the facility or service location.

At your visit, ask about the mission statement or philosophy. In other

words, what are their beliefs when it comes to serving people with disabilities and what do they see as their reason for being in business? Do they use language that is respectful and dignified to persons with disabilities?

Try to find out if the provider sees the consumer as a person or as a dollar sign. Ask how families and consumers are involved in the planning process. Ask what their approach is to service delivery. Are services tailored to meet individual's needs and preferences?

What are the provider's policies regarding:

- a. transportation (getting you to and from the places you need and want to go)
- b. social relationships (talking to and spending time with friends and people you like)
- c. safety (preventing you from harm)
- d. medical/health care (how will you get the medical attention you need)
- e. recreation and community involvement (making sure your leisure time includes fun, entertainment and involvement in clubs or groups which you choose)
- f. handling consumer or family concerns/issues (if there are problems or concerns, what will the agency do to follow-up?)
- g. family involvement (talking to and spending time with family members)
- h. staff and agency training (what type and how much training do agency staff get?)
- i. consumer satisfaction (how does the agency follow-up to make sure consumers are pleased with the services they get?)
- j. abuse and neglect reports and procedures (what is done when a consumer believes there has been abuse or neglect?)

Ask how many staff would be available to provide supports in the service setting. How many people does each staff support at one

time? This will help you know if the amount of individual attention and training you can expect to receive will meet your needs.

Talk to the:

- a. Executive Director
- b. Service Coordinator or Early Interventionist
- c. Residential Staff/Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional
- d. Work/Vocational Staff
- e. Medical/Psychological Staff

17. What else can I do?

Do you know other consumers/families receiving services? Do you belong to an advocacy group? Talk to families and/or consumers currently being served. What do others who use the services of this provider say about them?

18. If I have other questions, who do I call?

Additional questions should be directed to your Service Coordinator, Early Interventionist, or Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional. If you still have questions after talking with them, call your local Disabilities and Special Needs Board's Executive Director.